

~~SM-248~~

SM-382

CECIL'S MILL  
Great Mills  
Private

circa 1900

Cecil's Mill was constructed by John T. Cecil circa 1900 on the site of the 1826 Clifton Factory. It is a 2 1/2-story frame structure on stone and brick foundations, part of which remain from the earlier structure, with later shed additions. The mill produced flour and farm feeds until the early 1940's, and retains virtually all of its machinery.

The interior of the mill is of open bay construction, with the grain elevators, drive shafts and machinery clustered in the center of all three floors. Power was captured by a large metal overshot water wheel and transmitted along a primary drive shaft running the length of the basement. A friction clutch transferred the power to other connecting rods and belts throughout the mill. A diesel generator was added in the 1920's. (Cecil retained the gearing and main drive from the earlier building.) Included among the machines, which date from the mid-19th century through the early 20th, are a double rolling mill; corn grader; flour packer; scourer; corn sheller; feed grinders; scouring, polishing and separating machine; purifier; sifter; mixer; scalping chests; bran duster; dust collector; and grain polishers.

The Clifton Factory operation was begun circa 1810 to manufacture woolen and cotton goods and to mill grain and wood. In addition to the mill buildings, there stood a weaving house, dairy, stables, smokehouse, tailor's shop and workers' houses. The Factory was never completely successful owing to

continued

Cecil's Mill, page two

houses. The Factory was never completely successful owing to dissension among the owners, among other factors.

The present mill is the last standing in the district, an area historically much more prominent in agriculture than in industry.

This building has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places, U.S. Department of the Interior, as part of the Cecil's Mill Historic District.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Clifton Factory, The Factory, Clifton, Cliffton, Cecil's Mill

AND/OR COMMON

CECIL'S MILL HISTORIC DISTRICT (preferred)

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Indian Bridge Road, one eighth mile from the intersection with Md. Rt. 5

CITY, TOWN

Great Mills

☒ VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First

STATE

Maryland

CODE

024

COUNTY

St. Mary's County

CODE

037

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

☒ DISTRICT☐ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

☐ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☒ BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

☒ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

☒ YES: RESTRICTED☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO

## PRESENT USE

☐ AGRICULTURE☒ MUSEUM☐ COMMERCIAL☐ PARK☐ EDUCATIONAL☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ RELIGIOUS☐ GOVERNMENT☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ MILITARY☐ OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY** See continuation sheet page 1

NAME (Cecil's Mill)

St. Mary's County Historical Society, Inc.

Telephone #: 475-2467

STREET &amp; NUMBER

The Old Jail, Courthouse Square

CITY, TOWN

Leonardtown

☐ VICINITY OF

STATE zip code

Maryland 20650

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

St. Mary's County Courthouse, Land Records Office

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Courthouse Square

CITY, TOWN

Leonardtown

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

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Cecil's Mill Historic District  
St. Mary's County  
Maryland

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 4 PAGE 1

OWNER OF PROPERTY (continued)

Cecil Home, Old Holy Face Church -

Rosie B. Cecil (301) 994-1133  
Indian Bridge Road  
Great Mills, Maryland

Cecil Store -

John A. Cecil  
William F. Cecil  
Indian Bridge Road  
Great Mills, Maryland

The store is listed as being the same as above, but I do not believe this to be correct. John A. Cecil and William F. Cecil are the owners not Rosie B. Cecil, and they are in the process of drawing up documents to donate the store to the St. Mary's County Historical Society. This process may have already been completed but as of yet there has been no deed recorded in the Courthouse. The Historical Society should be contacted about the status of this property. I expect the conditions will be similar to those for the Mill which they already donated.

## 7 DESCRIPTION

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CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		DATE _____

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Cecil's Mill District is located about one quarter mile from the intersection of Maryland Route 5 and Indian Bridge Road in Great Mills, St. Mary's County, Maryland. Included are four buildings: Cecil's Mill, Cecil Store, the Cecil Home and Old Holy Face Church and part of the fields, woods and streams necessary to preserve the rural flavor and integrity of the historic district.

The northern boundary is a small bridge on the Indian Bridge Road where it crosses the Western Branch of the St. Mary's River. This same western branch is the western boundary; the southern boundary is a line east from the river to a point south of the store with the eastern boundary running from that point north to the western branch.

Cecil's Mill is a two and one half story structure located on the west side of Indian Bridge Road on the western branch of the St. Mary's River. It is a wood framed, tin-roofed structure with clapboard and corrugated tin siding. Constructed about 1900, it was originally a two and one half story rectangular building with cellar. Several shed additions of one and two stories had been added since construction. The foundation retains some of the original stone and brickwork from the 1826 Clifton Factory as well as the original drive and gearing. On the north side of the mill is an unsheltered saw mill with the tracks, carriage and gearing intact. This mill was used until 1959 and the interior grist mill until the early 1940's.

The interior of the mill is of open bay construction with the grain elevators, drive shafts and machinery clustered in the center of the bay on all three floors. A large metal overshot water wheel located in the extreme northeast corner of the building was added circa 1900. Running the length of the basement is a primary drive shaft which originally received power transmitted by a belt from the water wheel. A simple friction clutch located approximately ten feet from the north end of the basement allowed power to be transmitted to the entire shaft, and through a series of vertical belts to other similar shafts on the upper floors. Numerous elevator shoes and the bases of two grain bins also are located near the shaft. The drive shaft also leads outside the north end of the building and powered the circular saw mill.

On the first floor, the main portion of the mill is entered through a one-story shed addition built on the west facade. A small office is located to the left of the entrance. The central mill houses various pieces of mulling equipment designed to produce finished flour and various farm feeds. One of the three original double rolling mills (two sets of cast iron rollers) exists in situ. Also in the northern end of the mill is a corn grader (Monarch Grader, Style TT, Number 60), for cracking corn for chicken feed, and a set of two horizontal millstones on a steel shaft also used to grind corn into feed. In the northwest corner a set of steps leads to the second floor. In the southeast corner is a flour packer (S Howes Co., Silver Creek, New York, patent dates 1882-85)

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Cecil's Mill Historic District  
St. Mary's County

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

DESCRIPTION (continued)

fed from a chute above. Behind this and not in original position, is a Wolf Double Scourer, a machine that cleaned impurities from grain before grinding. In the southwest corner a long wooden bin was used to store bagged flour. An entrance way next to the bin leads into the southern shed addition which houses three machines used to manufacture feeds. The three machines now in this section are: A triumph Cornsheller, manufactured by the C.O. Bartlett & Snow Company, Cleveland Ohio, ca1900; a McCormick Deering feed grinder, manufactured by International Harvester Co.; a bulk feed grinder (which extracts corn kennels from the cob) manufactured by the Paper Machine Company, Shortsville, New York.

In the extreme western shed addition to the mill, a Fairbanks and Morse Company diesel generator (Y Engine, HP50, RPM 257, Style V) was added in the 1920's to assist in producing power to drive the main shaft. At a point ten feet from the western wall, the floor drops some four feet to the basement level, to allow a large leather belt to connect the generator and the shaft.

On the second floor in the northeast corner, a chute from the third floor feeds a Cranston Scouring, Polishing and Separating machine (with magnetic attachment built by the Huntley Manufacturing Co., Silver Creek, New York, patent dates 1883-93). Next to a large bin in the northwest corner, a Wolf Middlings Purifier is also fed from a chute from the third floor. This machine separates middlings so that grain can be re-introduced and ground by the roller mill on the first floor. Located next to the purifier is a Levelsifter (made by the Wolf Co., Chambersburg, Pennsylvania 190 RPM automatic control roller bearing, self-balancing) which separates flour into different grades. Behind the sifter is a large bin and numerous elevator shafts. To the right of the bin is a Wolf Perfected Cornground Drive Receiving Separator (Size 770, Number 913, Style AA). This machine separates wheat or other grains from impurities by size and weight before grinding. Chaff is drawn through a blower and exited through a chute outside the building. In the southeast corner is a small set of steps to the floor below and another bin. In the southwest corner a set of steps leads to the third floor. Next to the steps is a large metal mixer on a stand below a large wooden chute. This was probably used to custom blend different flour mixtures for sale below.

On the third floor a massive bank of eighteen elevator heads fills the room. On the west side of the elevator heads are: A Case Company

See continuation sheet # 3

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St. Mary's County

CONTINUATION SHEET Maryland

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PAGE

3

DESCRIPTION (continued)

Scalping Chest; a Wolf Horizontal Bran Duster (size 230), which dusted and separated flour from bran; and a second scalping chest, not in place, in the extreme northwest corner. Next to the northend of the elevator bank is a corrugated tin dust collector with blower that sends dust down a wooden shaft to the floor below. Behind the bank of elevator heads, near the center of the bay along the east facade, is another grain polisher. Lastly, the extreme south elevator head is attached to a chute which leads over the roof and into the southern addition to the mill. Through this chute, corn was collected and sent below to be processed by the machines discussed above.

Across the street on the east side of Indian Bridge Road stands the store, house and Holy Face Church.

The store is five bays long with a two bay shed addition on each end and is two and one-half stories high. It is also three bays deep with a two bay addition which extends across the rear of the building for a total of nine bays. The roof is gabled with corbeled exterior chimneys flanking each end of the original five bay structure, and has a large cross gable with a six-over-six light, double hung sash window. A one story porch extends the entire length (nine bays) of the front facade of the building with double door entrances in the center of the building and in each addition. The first floor is of open bay construction except for the former post office on the north end. (This post office retains most of the original office equipment including pigeon holes). The second and third floors are partitioned into rooms. This building was constructed in the 1920's and is a good example of a rural store.

The Cecil Home is north of the store on the same side of Indian Bridge Road. It was constructed in the late 1800's and is five bays long by three bays wide and two and one-half stories high. The house has two additions at the rear, one two and one-half stories and the other one and one-half stories. The house with the additions is L shaped. A one story porch extends across the front with a dormer above and corbeled chimneys at the roof peak. The siding is clapboard and the gable roof asphalt shingled. This house was constructed on the site of the tavern and served as an inn as well as the home of the Cecils.

To the north of the house separated by a small field is a barn and the Old Holy Face Church. This Church, abandoned in the 1940's, was constructed in the mid 1800's. It is two stories high, of wood frame two bays wide by three long. It stands steeple-less and slowly falling into disrepair with greyed and weathered siding. The barn is also falling into disrepair.

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1810-1959

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

John T. Cecil

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Cecil's Mill Historic District is of interest for two reasons: its historical use as a mill site, and the existence of the turn of the century mill and related buildings presently on the site.

The Clifton Factory was the first and only attempt to establish industry in St. Mary's County until the 20th century. The "Factory" area has been the site of milling establishments since before the Revolution with the "Great Mill" about a mile downstream and the "Indian Bridge Mill" about a quarter mile above. The area was not only an economic center in the St. Mary's County community but a cultural one as well.

Clifton Factory on Indian Bridge Road at the headwaters of the St. Mary's River was on the main road from St. Mary's City to Leonardtown. Travelers stopped at the factory to have wood cut or grain milled, and at the tavern where the Cecil Home now stands, to pass the time of day and rest on the long journey. The Factory area also contained a post office, tannery and blacksmith shop.

The Clifton Factory was built by William Hebb, Peter Gough and William C. Somerville about 1810. The factory was built to manufacture woolen and cotton goods as well as mill grain and wood. The factory area also contained a weaving house, dairy, stables, smokehouse, tailors shop and houses for the supervisors and workers.

The Factory was owned by a succession of people after the original owners had serious disagreements over the operation of the mill and several lawsuits were initiated. One of these suits in 1866 shows Johns Hopkins suing Thomas W. Gough, Joseph Forrest, Henry J. Carroll, Joseph H. Maddox and E. Lee Spaulding.

These men incorporated the Clifton Factory in 1860 and sold stock at \$25 a share distributed in proportion to the individual incorporator's interest. Johns Hopkins was one investor in the corporation which failed by 1866. The Factory was put up for sale for failure to pay back taxes for the years 1862, 1863 and 1864. The company was liquidated and the St. Mary's County Tax Assessment for 1870 shows Thomas O. Spencer in sole ownership of the factory. It appears that he bought out the other partners and paid Johns Hopkins.



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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SIGNIFICANCE (continued)

The mill was operated on and off during the rest of the century. It is not known exactly when the textile mill was shut down, but all of the equipment had certainly been removed well before the turn of the century. It appears that the operation was never particularly successful and was characterized by dissension between the owners.

The factory was an experiment unique in southern Maryland in that it attempted to provide an economic base outside of the monoculture tobacco industry. This experiment involved not only the manufacture of textiles but also the raising of sheep and the cultivation of cotton. Both the sheep and the cotton failed. The land, already in poor condition because of poor farming practices used in growing tobacco, failed to nurture cotton and could not survive the destructive eating habits of the sheep. Also, few farmers were willing to risk their livelihood on a new crop, and after the Civil War, labor was no longer as cheap or as plentiful as it once had been. Perhaps the single largest consideration was the development of milling elsewhere in Maryland and the subsequent development of transportation lines and markets far away from St. Mary's County, specifically in Baltimore and Ellicott City.

Cecil's Mill, constructed in 1900 by John T. Cecil, stands on the site of the Clifton Factory. William F. Cecil purchased the property in 1882. William Cecil ran the Factory and the Indian Bridge Mill a short distance upstream until the latter was destroyed by flood in the 1890's. In 1900 John T. Cecil knocked down the old factory and constructed the present structure. This mill is the last one standing in the district. All the others have been destroyed and only traces remain.

Cecil retained part of the original foundations, the gearing and the main drive. These parts remain intact today. In the early 20th century, an overshot water wheel and sluice were placed to the rear of the structure. Faint evidence of the sluice still exist north of the house and lead to a point along the west St. Mary's River where the original sluice gate was placed. The mill was a belt driven grist mill with a saw mill standing outside of the main structure. It is three stories high with the drive in the cellar and all of the milling equipment intact. In 1927 H. Robb Cecil moved the first diesel generator in St. Mary's County from Leonardtown where it had been replaced, and installed it in the mill. Cecil ran the mill with that engine and the overshot water wheel. (It should be noted that this engine was the first electrical generator of any kind in St. Mary's County). The saw mill was run until 1959 when Cecil was killed by a tooth from the saw wheel. The

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**SIGNIFICANCE (continued)**

Grist Mill discontinued operation in the 1940's.

Across the street from Cecil's Mill is the Cecil Store, the Cecil Home and Old Holy Face Church. The store is now closed. It housed the Great Mills Post Office for many years and at one time five members of the Cecil Family had all been postmasters. The store was built in the early 1900's as was the house (on the site of the tavern). Old Holy Face Church, constructed in the late 1800's, has stood abandoned and steeple-less since 1940. These buildings are reminders of the passing of an era in the rural life of the County.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

SM-382

1. Regina Combs Hammett, "My Search for the Great Mill",  
St. Mary's Chronicles  
Vol. 20 Issue 11 & 12, November & December 1972,  
Vol. 21 Issue 1,2,3,4, January - April 1973

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET PAGE 6

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 6 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A 18 368400 4233340  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
C         

B           
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
D         

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

John K. Bruton, Research Analyst & Mark R. Edwards/Historic Sites

ORGANIZATION Survey Coordinator

DATE November 23, 1976

St. Mary's County Committee Maryland Historical Trust/Maryland Historical

Trust STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE (301) 373-5251/

c/o David Roberts, Chmn. 109 Lakeland Dr./21 State Circle 269-2438

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Hollywood/Annapolis

Maryland

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE   

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*John N. Pearce* 7/26/77

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (continued)

2. St. Mary's Gazette (Beacon)  
November 29, 1860  
August 17, 1865  
October 18, 1866  
(Microfilm #Mfm 533,534,535, St. Mary's College of Maryland,  
Library)
3. Deed Records, St. Mary's County Courthouse  
Leonardtown, Maryland
4. Register of Wills, St. Mary's County Courthouse  
Leonardtown, Maryland
5. Alienations and Transfers, St. Mary's County Clerk's safe  
Leonardtown, Maryland
6. Private Notebook, Benjamin Tippet, St. Mary's County Surveyor  
St. Mary's County Clerk's safe  
Leonardtown, Maryland
7. Tax Assessment Records, St. Mary's County  
Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland

## INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Clifton Factory

AND/OR COMMON

The Factory, Clifton, Cliffton, Cecil's Mill**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Indian Bridge Road, one eighth mile from the intersection with Md. RT. 5

CITY, TOWN

Great MillsX VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

First Congressional District

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

St. Mary's County**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

X DISTRICT— BUILDING(S)— STRUCTURE— SITE— OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

— PUBLIC— PRIVATEX BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

— IN PROCESS— BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

X OCCUPIED— UNOCCUPIED— WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

X YES: RESTRICTED— YES: UNRESTRICTED— NO

## PRESENT USE

— AGRICULTURE— COMMERCIAL— EDUCATIONAL— ENTERTAINMENT— GOVERNMENT— INDUSTRIAL— MILITARYX MUSEUM— PARKX PRIVATE RESIDENCE— RELIGIOUS— SCIENTIFIC— TRANSPORTATION— OTHER**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

(SEE CONTINUATION SHEET)

NAME (Clifton Factory)

St. Mary's County Historical Society Inc.Telephone #: 475-2467

STREET &amp; NUMBER

The Old Jail, Courthouse Square

CITY, TOWN

Leonardtown— VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 20650**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE.

(SEE CONTINUATION SHEET)

Liber #: DBK 233

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

St. Mary's County Courthouse, Land Records OfficeFolio #: 11

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Courthouse Square

CITY, TOWN

Leonardtown

STATE

Maryland**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

NONE

DATE

— FEDERAL — STATE — COUNTY — LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION****CONDITION**

☐ EXCELLENT  
☐ GOOD  
☒ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED  
☐ RUINS  
☐ UNEXPOSED

**CHECK ONE**

☐ UNALTERED  
☒ ALTERED

**CHECK ONE**

☒ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE**

The Clifton Factory District is located about one quarter mile from the intersection of Md. Rt. 5 and Indian Bridge Road in Great Mills, Maryland, St. Mary's County. The district will include four buildings- Cecil Mill, Cecil Store, The Cecil Home and Old Holy Face Church. It should also include those fields, woods and streams necessary to preserve the rural flavor and integrity of the Historic District.

The northern-most boundry is a small bridge of the Indian Bridge Road where it crosses the Western Branch of the St. Mary's River. This same western branch is the western boundry and the southern boundry is from the river east to a point south of the store with the east bound running from that point north to the stream crossed by the bridge.

The Cecil Mill is a two and one half story structure located on the west side of Indian Bridge Road on the Western Branch of the St. Mary's River. This mill is a wood framed, tin-roofed structure with clapboard and corrugated tin siding. The Mill was constructed about 1900 and was originally a two and one half story rectangular building with cellar. Several shed additions of one and two stories added since construction. The foundation retains some of the original stone and brickwork from the 1826 Clifton Factory as well as the original drive and gearing. On the N side of the mill is an un-sheltered saw mill with the tracks, carriage and gearing intact. This mill was used until 1959 and the interior grist mill until the early 1940's.

The interior of the mill is of openbay construction with the grain elevators, drives and machinery clustered in the center of each bay on all three floors. A three story grain bin sits in the SE corner of the structure. All of the original roller milling equipment is intact but no longer in working order. Shed additions on the W or front of the mill house a workshop, office and diesel engine used to drive the mill. A two storied shed on the S end housed grain and some milling equipment and the shed at the rear or E side sheltered the overshot wheel and gearing as well as providing more storage area.

Across the street on the east side of Indian Bridge Road stands the store, house and Holy Face Church.

The store is five bays long with a two bay extension on each end and is two and one half stories high. It is also three bays deep with a two bay addition which extends across the entire length of the building for a total of nine bays. The roof is gabled with corbeled chimneys flanking each gable of the original five bay structure and has a large dormer with six-over-six windows in the E slope. A one story porch extends the entire length (nine bays) of the E or front of the building with doubledoor entrances in the center of the building and each addition. The first floor is of open bay construction except for the former post office on the N end. (This post office retains most of the original office equipment includidng pigeon holes.) The second and third floors are partitioned into rooms. This building was constructed in the 1920's and is a good example of a rural store.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
100-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
X 1800-1899	X <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
X 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1810-1959

BUILDER/ARCHITECT John T. Cecil

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Clifton Factory District is significant because it was the first and only attempt in St. Mary's County to establish industry until modern times. The "Factory" area had been the site of milling establishments since before revolutionary times with the "Great Mill" about a mile downstream and the "Indian Bridge Mill" about a quarter mile above and formed a center for not only the economic life of the St. Mary's County community but a cultural center as well.

Clifton Factory on Indian Bridge Road at the headwaters of the St. Mary's River was on the main road from St. Mary's City to Leonardtown and travelers not only stopped at the factory to have wood cut or grain milled but stopped at the tavern where the Cecil Home now stands to pass the time of day and rest on the long journey. The Factory area also contained a post office, tannery and a blacksmith shop.

The Clifton Factory was built by William Hebb, Peter Gough and William C. Somerville about 1810. The factory was built to manufacture wollen and cotton goods as well as mill grain and wood. The factory area also contained a weaving house, dairy, stables, smoke house, tailors shop and houses for the supervisors and workers.

The Factory was owned by a succession of people after the original owners appeared to have serious disagreements over how the mill was run and the mill was subject of several lawsuits. One of these suits in 1866 shows Johns Hopkins suing Thomas W. Gough, Joseph Forrest, Henry J. Carroll, Joseph H. Maddox and E. Lee Spaulding.

These men had incorporate the Clifton Factory in 1860 and sold stock at \$25 a share distributed in proportion to the individual incorporators interest. Johns Hopkins invested in the factory and the corporation failed by 1866. The Factory was put up for sale for failure to pay back taxes for the years 1862, 1863 and 1864. The company was liquidated and the St. Mary's County Tax Assessment for 1870 shows Thomas O. Spencer in sole ownership of the factory. It appears that he bought out the other partners and paid Johns Hopkins.

The mill was operated on and off during the rest of the century. It is not know exactly when the textile milling was shut down but all of the equipment had certainly been removed well before the turn of the century. It appears

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

1. Regina Combs Hammett, "My Search for the Great Mill",  
St. Mary's Chronicles  
 Vol. 20 Issue 11 & 12, November & December 1972,  
 Vol. 21 Issue 1,2,3,4, January - April 1973

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

SEE Deed Records- DBK 233/11 and JMM 10/1 for descriptions.

**LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES**

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

John K. Bruton, Research Analyst

November 23, 1976

ORGANIZATION

St. Mary's County Committee Maryland Historical Trust

DATE

STREET &amp; NUMBER

c/o David Roberts, Chmn. 109 Lakeland Dr.

TELEPHONE

(301) 373-5251

CITY OR TOWN

Hollywood

STATE

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
 The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
 Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
 (301) 267-1438



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NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION FORMCONTINUATION SHEET

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## Clifton Factory District

## #7 Description

The Cecil Home is north of the store on the same side of Indian Bridge Road. It was constructed in the late 1800's and is five bays long by three bays wide by two and one half stories high. The house has two additions at the rear one two and one half stories and the other one and one half stories and are two bays long by two bays wide respectively. The house with the additions is L shaped. A one story porch extends across the front of the house with a dormer above and corbled chimneys at the roof peak. The siding is clapboard and the gable roof asphalt shingled. This house was constructed on the site of the tavern and served as a Inn as well as the home of the Cecil's.

To the north of the house seperated by a small field is a barn and the Old Holy Face Church. This Church abandoned in the 1940's was constructed in the mid 1800's. It is two stories, wood frame two bays wide by three long. It stands steeple-less and slowly falling into disrepair greyed and weathered.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST WORKSHEET  
NATIONAL REGISTER NOMINATION FORMCONTINUATION SHEET

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## Clifton Factory District

## #8 Significance

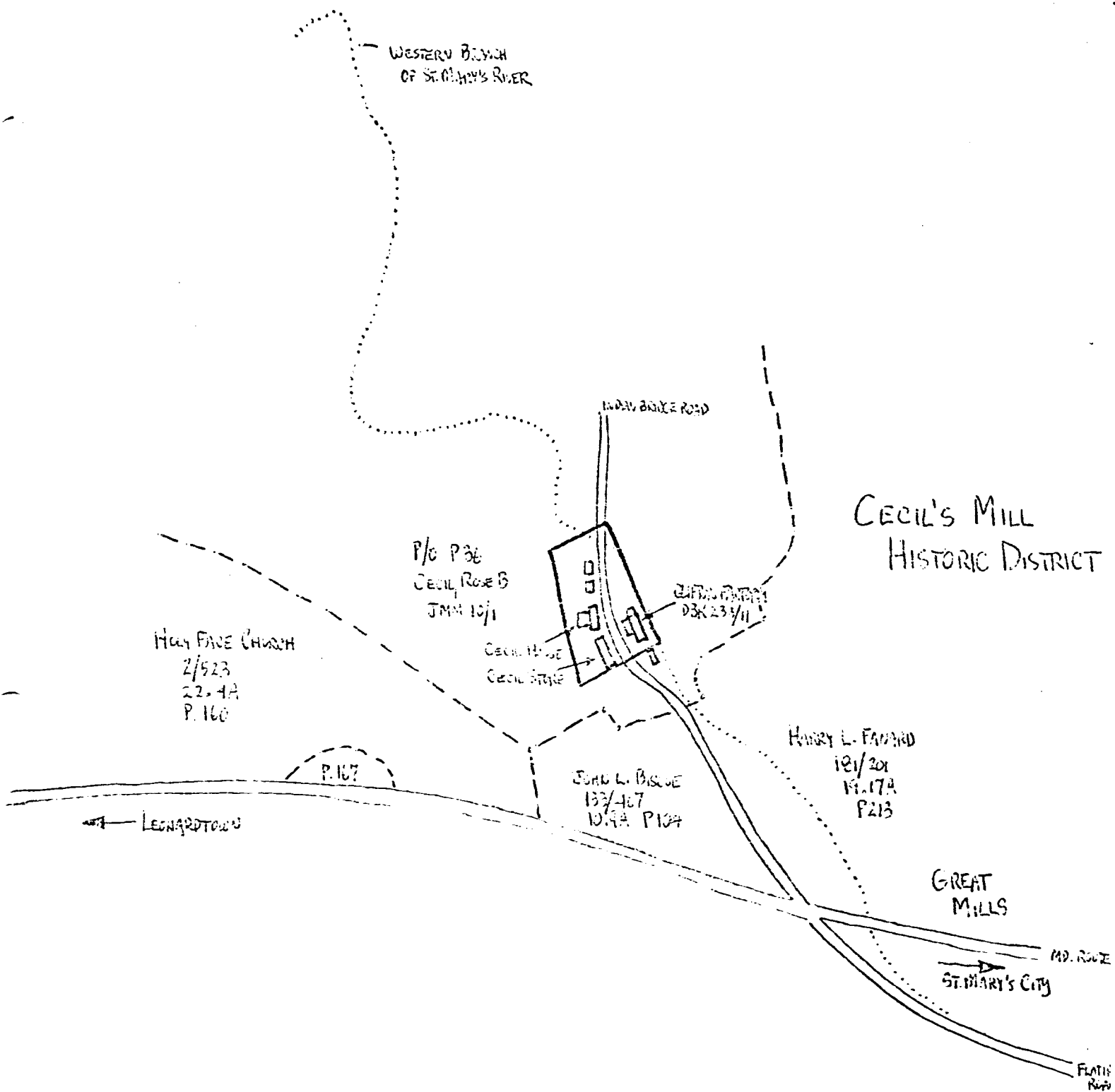
that the operation was never particularly successful and was characterized by dissention between the owners.

The Factory was an experiment unique in southern Maryland in that it attempted to provide an economic base outside of the monoculture tobacco industry. This experiment involved not only the manufacture of textiles but also the raising of sheep and the growing of cotton. Both the sheep and the cotton failed. The land already in poor condition because of the continual raising of tobacco failed to nurture cotton and could not survive the destructive eating habits of the sheep. Also few farmers were willing to risk their livelihood on a new crop... the same cycle that trapped them into tobacco to begin with. Too after the civil war labor was no longer as cheap or as plentiful as it once had been. Perhaps the single largest consideration was the development of milling elsewhere in Maryland and the subsequent development of transportation lines and markets far away from St. Mary's County specifically in Baltimore and Ellicott City.

Cecil's Mill constructed in 1900 by John T. Cecil stands on the site of the Clifton Factory. William F. Cecil purchased the property in 1882. William Cecil ran the Factory and the Indian Bridge Mill a short distance upstream until the Indian Bridge Mill was destroyed by flood in the 1890's. In 1900 John T. Cecil knocked down the old factory and constructed the present structure. This mill now standing is the last mill in the district. All of the others have been destroyed and only traces remain.

Cecil retained part of the original foundations, the original water wheel, gearing and the main drive. These parts remain intact today. The mill was a belt driven grist mill with a saw mill standing outside of the main structure. It is three stories high with the drive in the cellar and all of the milling equipment intact. In 1927 H. Robb Cecil moved the first diesel generator in St. Mary's County from Leonardtown where it had been repalced and installed it in the mill. Cecil ran the mill with that engine and the overshot water wheel. (It should be noted that this engine was the first electrical generator of any kind in St. Mary's County.) The saw mill was run until 1959 when H. Robb Cecil was killed by a tooth from the saw wheel. The Grist Mill discontinued operation in the the 1940's.

Across the street from the Cecil Mill is the Cecil Store, the Cecil Home and Old Holy Face Church. The store is now closed. It housed the Great Mills Post Office for many years and at one time five members of the Cecil Family had all been postmasters. The store was built in the early 1900's as was the house (on the site of the tavern) and old Holy Face Church constructed in the late 1800's stands abandoned and steeple-less since 1940 beside the house. All of these buildings in this area are significant reminders of the passing of an era in the rural life of the nation.



SM-382

KEY:

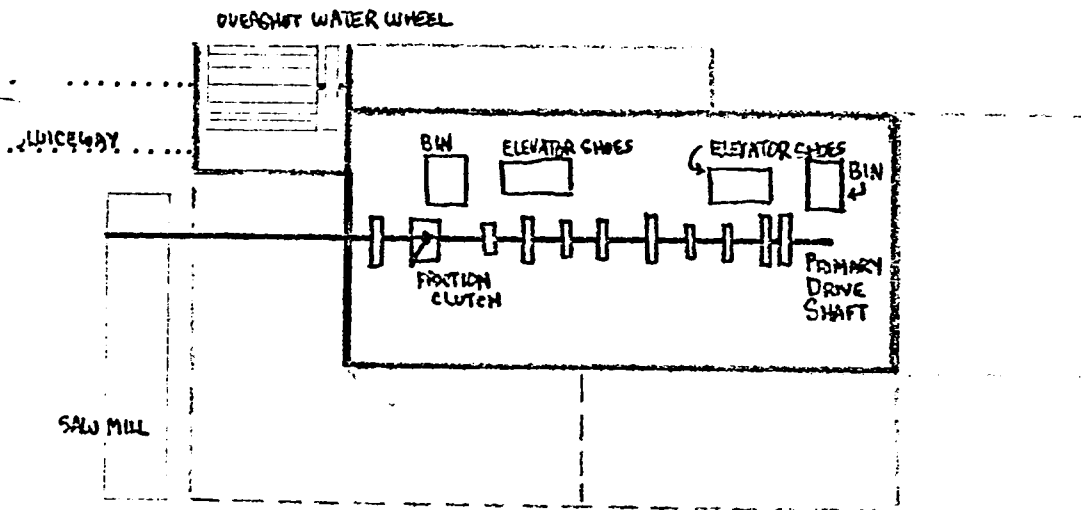
— PROPOSED DISTRICT

DATA FROM ST. MARY'S  
TAX MAP 50

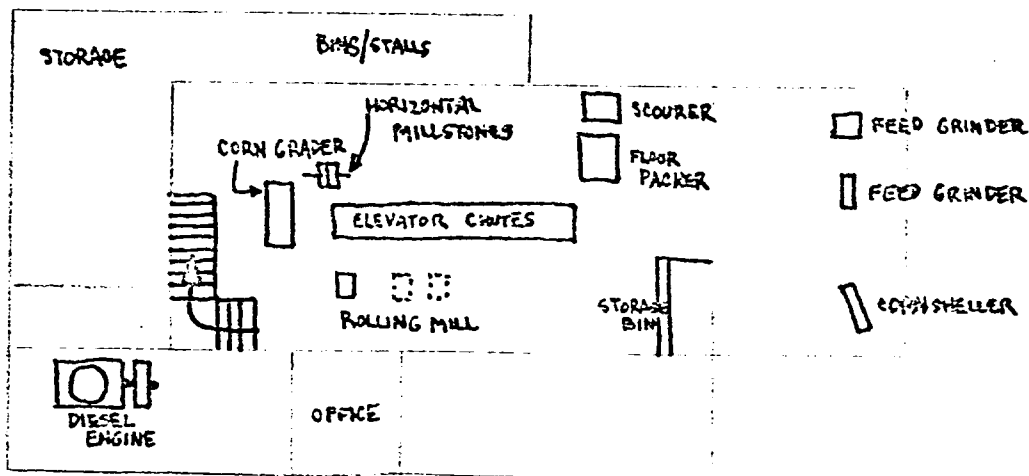
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SM-382

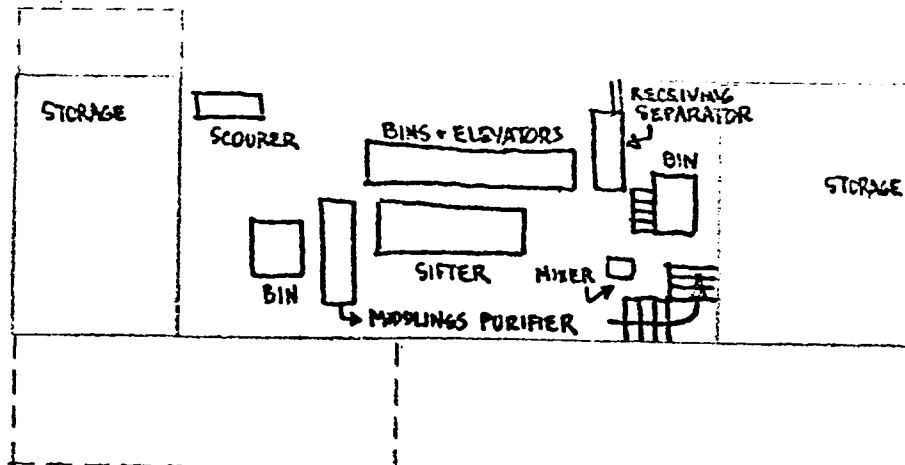
# CECIL'S MIL



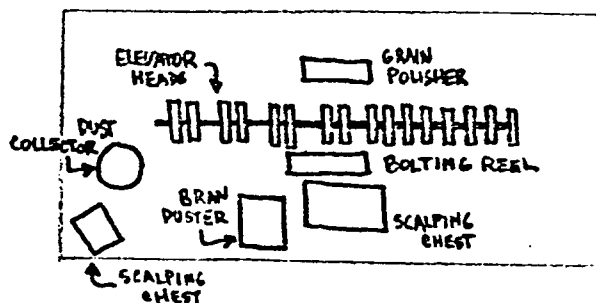
BASEMENT



1ST FLOOR



2ND FLOOR



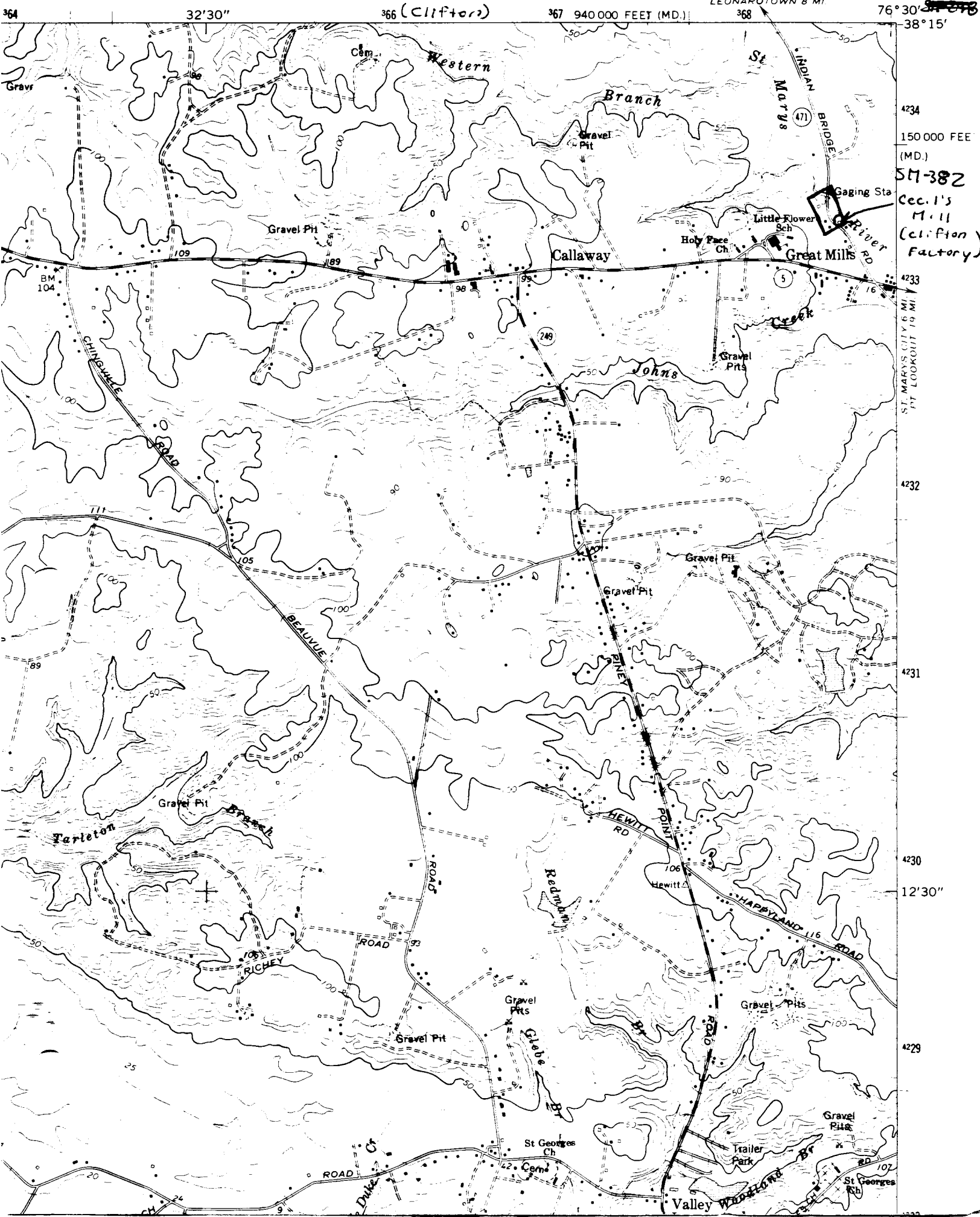
3RD FLOOR

CECIL'S MILL HISTORIC DISTRICT 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

MARYLAND - VIRGINIA

57° 00' (SOLOMON)

LEONARDTOWN 8 MI



4234  
150 000 FEE  
(MD.)  
57-382  
Cec. 1's  
M. 11  
(Cl. Pion)  
Factory

4233

4232

4231

4230

4229

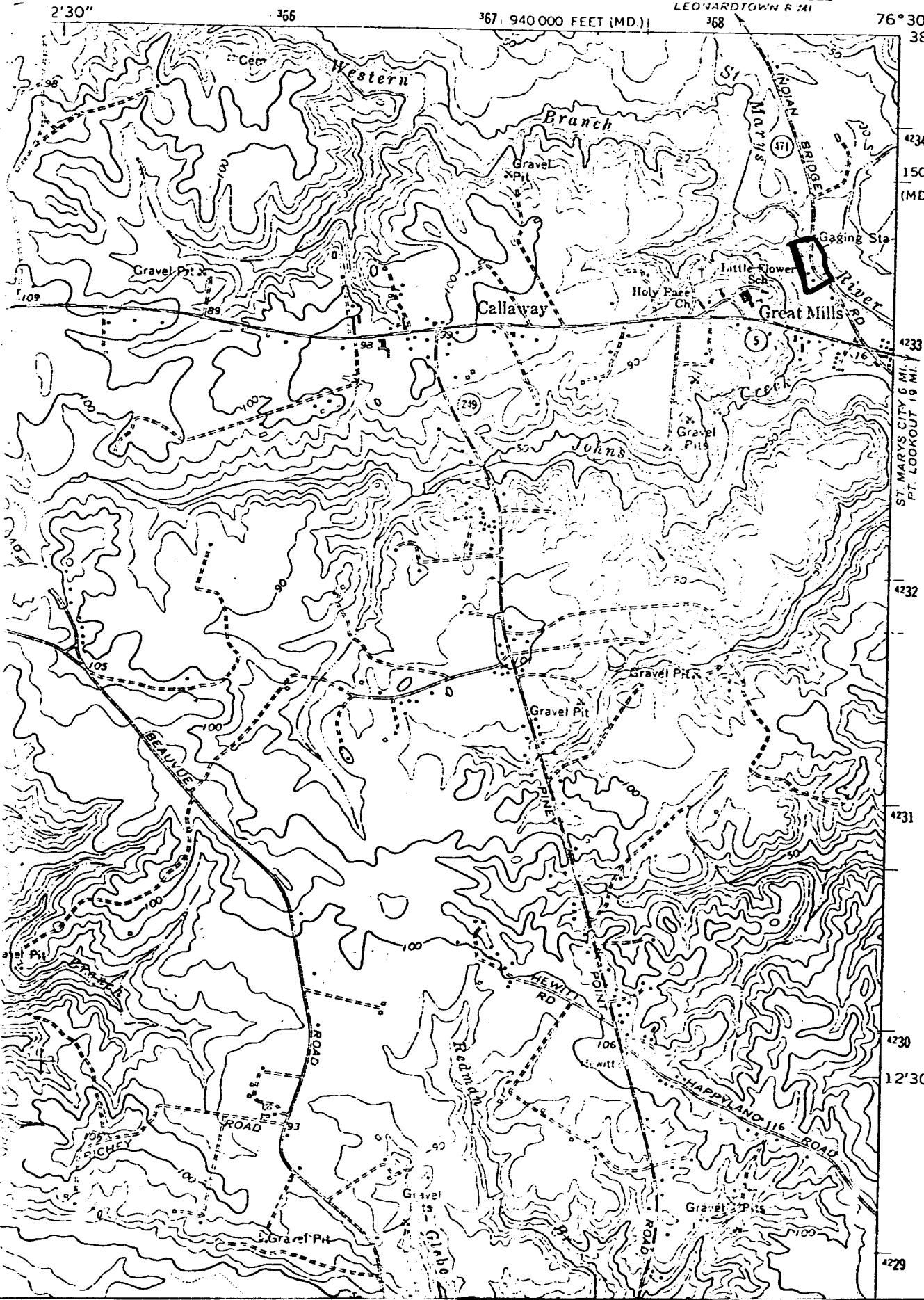
PINEY POINT QUADRANGLE  
 MARYLAND-VIRGINIA  
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

NE 1/4 PINEY POINT 15' QUADRANGLE  
 LEONARDTOWN R 2 MI

5700 IV SW  
 (SOLOMONS ISLAND)

Cecil's Mill  
 Historic  
 District

SM-382



ST. MARYS CITY 6 MI.  
 PT. LOOKOUT 19 MI.



SM-382

Cecil's Mill

St Mary's County, Md

Kirk Rancetta

Md SHPO

Nov 1999

S + E elevations

1 of 1





Cecil's Mill

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